

## Analysis of English Teaching Model in Higher Vocational Colleges from the Perspective of ESP Theory

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**Abstract:** Higher vocational education has always been an important part of China's higher education and the focus of social attention. With the rapid development of China's economy and the accelerated process of world economic globalization, all walks of life are in great need of talents with certain English skills and professional knowledge. Under the guidance of ESP (English for Specific Purposes), the teaching mode of "Basic English + Professional English" breaks through the traditional educational concept and mode of public English in Higher Vocational colleges. Higher vocational education has always been an important part of China's higher education and the focus of social attention. With the rapid development of China's economy and the acceleration of the globalization of the world economy, all walks of life are in great need of talents with certain English skills and professional knowledge. This paper briefly introduces the research and teaching development of ESP at home and abroad, points out the existing problems in higher vocational English teaching, and analyzes the feasibility of applying ESP theory to higher vocational English teaching.

### 1. Introduction

With the deepening of reform and opening up, the demand for compound talents in all walks of life is increasing. ESP research has gradually become a research hotspot in applied linguistics since the 1960s, which has greatly influenced the theory and practice of foreign language teaching [1]. English teaching in higher vocational colleges must also closely focus on this aim, follow the pace of social development, grasp the pulse of the times, constantly discover the existing problems in English teaching in higher vocational colleges and think about countermeasures [2]. With the development of China's higher vocational education and the improvement of the education system, the comprehensive quality of higher vocational students has attracted more and more attention from the society. The role of higher vocational English teaching in cultivating students' quality cannot be replaced by any other professional courses [3]. As a stage in higher vocational English teaching, professional English teaching in higher vocational colleges is a natural extension of basic English teaching. Its purpose is to impart relevant knowledge and skills of workplace English and to pay attention to the connection between knowledge and specific tasks or processes [4]. The ESP model is a professional and practical teaching model. Its theory is beneficial for teachers to cultivate students' cognitive ability and practice future working environment standards according to the characteristics of teaching.

The ESP teaching mode is an innovation for vocational English teaching. It is based on textbooks and combines language teaching with course content. In the context of economic globalization, English is still the lingua franca of the world. Many industries require practitioners not only to have professional knowledge, but also to master certain English proficiency [5]. Through proficient English communication, we can better develop our professional skills, truly realize the common improvement of knowledge and ability, coordinate development, and prepare students for higher vocational education to enter the workplace. The study of English in higher vocational colleges is the need to cultivate students' all-round development and sustainable development. At the same time, the study of vocational English also contributes to the mastery of students' professional

knowledge [6]. Higher vocational students are technical talents in the future production line. Under the situation of increasingly close global economic cooperation, if you want to adapt to the needs of the times and the survival of the times, mastering foreign language skills is of great significance to higher vocational students [7]. Professional English belongs to the special-purpose English category, and its teaching should meet the actual needs of students, industry and enterprises. Therefore, this paper starts from the ESP curriculum system theory and explores the construction of vocational English teaching mode.

## **2. Current Situation of Vocational English Teaching in Higher Vocational Colleges**

At present, vocational English teaching in higher vocational colleges is mostly undertaken by English teachers, and a few by professional teachers. Most English teachers are English majors with single knowledge structure and lack of professional background. They often fail to explain professional knowledge and skills accurately and effectively. The content of ESP teaching should start from the point of view of why students learn English, that is, students' needs for communicating and learning in English. The assessment of professional English in higher vocational colleges is mainly based on the results at ordinary times and at the end of the term. The results at ordinary times are mainly attendance in class, dictation of words and homework. Teachers, as the only subject of evaluation, neglect students' participation and individual differences. ESP teaching cannot simply copy the EGP teaching mode, nor can it adopt the traditional teaching method of translating texts in industrial English classes. Some students do not realize the importance of learning English ideologically and think that English knowledge will not be of much help to their future employment development, which leads to their low enthusiasm for learning English. This embarrassing situation has seriously affected the teaching efficiency and quality of professional English and cannot meet the requirements of the coordinated development of students' English and their majors.

At present, English teaching concepts in most higher vocational colleges in our country are still in the traditional mode, and the teaching mode still follows the examination-oriented education of the past. Many higher vocational English teachers' teaching ideas are still in the original traditional teaching methods. They think that as long as they carefully prepare lessons after class, the "cramming" teaching method in class will suffice. Teachers can divide students into several working groups according to different requirements of teaching contents and learning situations, and flexibly adopt various teaching methods such as situation simulation, role playing, case analysis, group discussion, communicative teaching, etc. ESP teaching is closely combined with occupation, with emphasis on the cultivation of students' communicative competence, so that language learning serves professional learning and learning and practice promote each other [8]. Professional English teachers are arbitrarily motivated, students' initiative is not strong, and the teaching effect is less than ideal. As a result, professional English learning in the higher vocational stage cannot meet the needs of the social industry. The English foundation of students in higher vocational colleges is uneven, but the overall characteristic is that students' English foundation is very weak. Therefore, when stratified teaching is carried out, how to stratify students is the most important thing. Good stratification will not guarantee the teaching effect.

## **3. Construction of Professional English Teaching Model in Higher Vocational Colleges**

### **3.1. Promoting Teachers' Level**

The introduction of ESP into higher vocational education will be a major reform to the current English teaching. ESP aims at imparting English language knowledge and skills related to a major. In teaching, ESP focuses on providing more opportunities for students to participate in English-medium classroom activities and effectively train students' ESP communicative competence. For higher vocational students with poor English foundation, it is difficult to implement it. The traditional teaching method cannot adapt to the task-based teaching mode [9]. English courses should not only strengthen the study of basic language knowledge, but also pay

attention to the cultivation of practical language skills, especially the ability to deal with daily and foreign business activities in English. Compared with traditional teaching evaluation, the teaching of professional English in higher vocational colleges is not only the learning of basic language knowledge and skills, but also the evaluation of students' comprehensive language application ability and the training of students' workplace English language application ability. ESP teaching should change the traditional role of teachers in classroom teaching, conform to the characteristics of professional higher vocational education, and continuously improve the depth and breadth of professional knowledge.

After the implementation of the first phase of ESP-supported English listening and speaking teaching, a phase test should be conducted. The main content of the test is the three modules learned in this stage. The test results are used as the basis for evaluating the learning effect of students in this stage, as well as the basis for strategy adjustment in the second stage. The test results are shown in Figure 1.

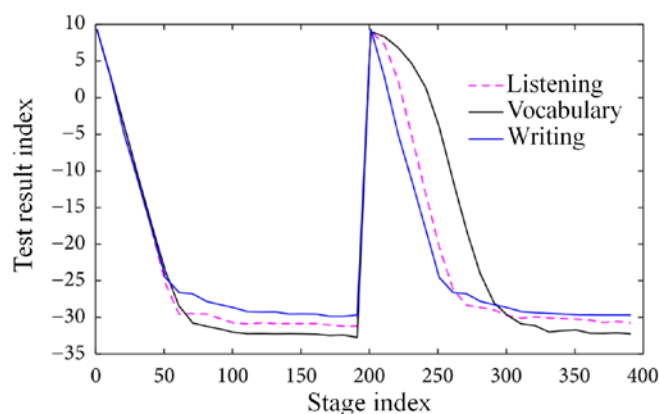


Fig.1. Comparison of written test scores of listening, vocabulary and writing

### 3.2. Innovative teaching mode

The focus of basic English teaching is to lay a good foundation for English language and strengthen basic skills training. The teaching content is based on comprehensive English courses in higher vocational colleges, which require students to master basic vocabulary and have certain English communicative ability. Although hierarchical teaching mode has many advantages, hierarchical teaching mode has certain defects. First, it is difficult to grasp the basis of hierarchical teaching. According to what standard, it is the key to stratify students. When designing specialized English courses, the analysis of the needs of the learners is to find out the distance between the learners' existing language ability and the desired degree of specialization, and the ultimate goal is to improve the teaching process [10]. The important feature of ESP is teaching analysis, which is different from the traditional teaching mode in the past. When determining the teaching content, it first analyses the different needs of different learners, and then analyses their basic level and anticipated English competence, instead of merely emphasizing the comprehensiveness of basic language knowledge and competence. At the stage of professional English teaching, according to the different requirements of different industries for English application ability, the corresponding teaching objectives are put forward, focusing on cultivating students' comprehensive English application ability in the workplace, and enhancing their adaptability and competitiveness in the workplace.

## 4. Conclusions

Professional English teaching reform is the inherent requirement of the development of Higher Vocational education, and plays an important role in Higher Vocational English education. The employment competition of students in higher vocational colleges is becoming increasingly fierce, and the employment situation is becoming more and more serious. ESP model can not only add to the talent training of Higher Vocational education, but also promote the development of higher

vocational education to a higher level. Constructing a scientific and systematic evaluation system of professional English teaching in higher vocational colleges is an inevitable requirement for the development of professional English curriculum construction in Higher Vocational colleges, and is also the trend of English teaching development in Higher Vocational colleges. ESP teaching pays attention to practicality and skill training, and closely combines with students' future career. English is used as a means or tool to learn and use. When basic English teaching is combined with specialized English teaching, students can complete real communicative behavior through language communication in practice, so that their language ability can be trained and improved, and students' interest in learning English can be stimulated. ESP mode is conducive to enhancing students' learning initiative, accelerating the effectiveness of language learning, improving their professional ability, and enabling students to acquire the English application ability required for future work to the maximum extent within a limited time. The development of professional English teaching in higher vocational colleges has a long way to go, which requires continuous exploration and improvement by higher vocational colleges and teachers.

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